REMARKS

The present Preliminary Amendment is submitted with the Continuation Application

enclosed herewith. The Continuation Application is based on and claims the priority of patent

application number 09/973,442, filed October 9, 2001, which was based on and claimed the

priority of provisional application number 60/242,276, filed October 20, 2000 and provisional

application number 60/263,941, filed January 24, 2001. The amendments contained in this

Preliminary Amendment should be considered prior to calculating the filing fee.

By this Preliminary Amendment, claims 1, 3, 30-32, 34-35, 39, 41 and 43-49 have been

amended, and claims 18-29, 33, 36-38, 40 and 42 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims

1-17, 30-32, 34-35, 39, 41 and 43-49 remain pending in this Continuation Application.

All claim amendments are fully supported throughout the specification and figures. For

example, the Examiner's attention is directed to pages 11, 13, 15 and 31-33 of the specification

and the associated figures. However, support for the claims as well as the current claim

amendments is provided throughout the specification. No new matter has been added.

The pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. However, if the

Examiner believes certain amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims or if the

Examiner wishes to resolve other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is

kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 23, 2004

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